Auriea Harvey: My Veins Are the Wires, My Body Is Your Keyboard

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An Exhibition Reader

Museum of the Moving Image, which presented the survey *Auriea Harvey: My Veins Are the Wires, My Body Is Your Keyboard* from February 2–December 1, 2024, would like to thank the Terra Foundation for its support of this reader and exhibition.

MUSEUM OF THE MOVING IMAGE

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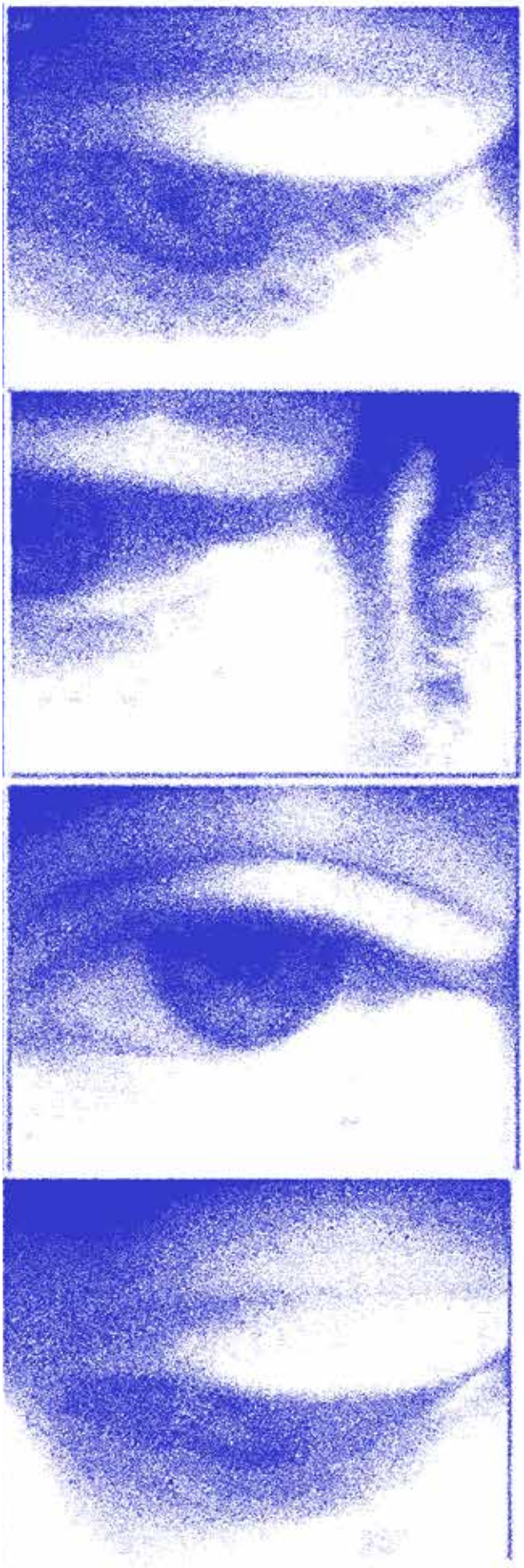

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INTRODUCTION

Instant Message, Telematic Embrace

by Regina Harsanyi

Bientôt l'été
by Tale of Tales, 2013

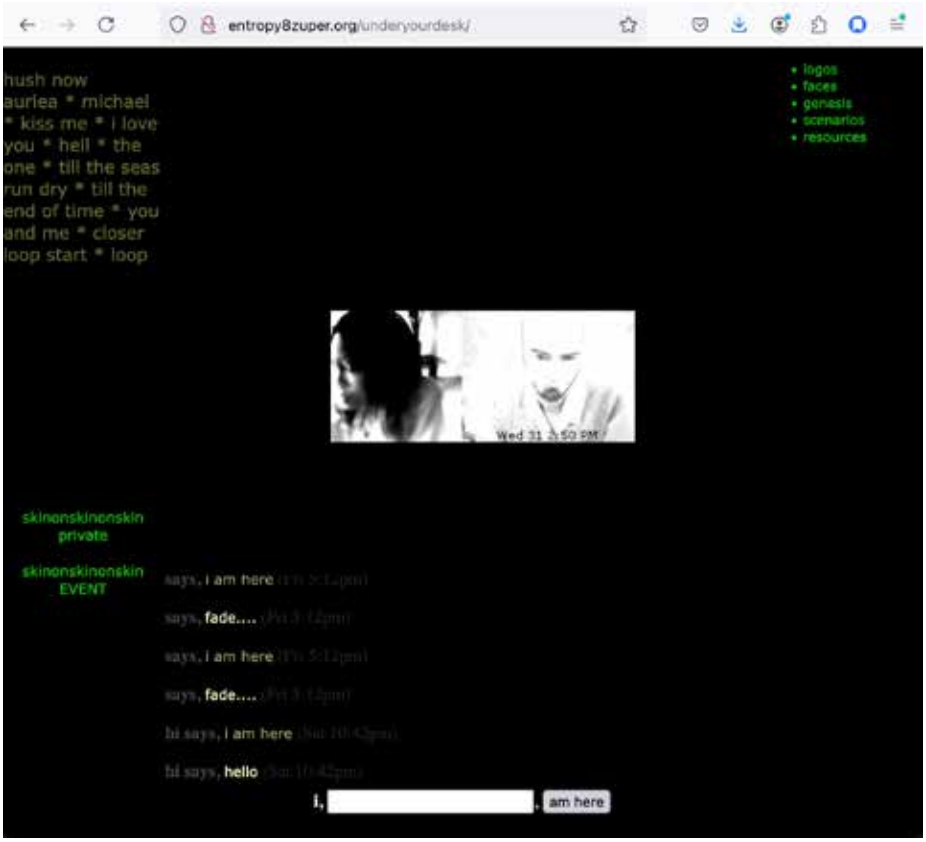
The internet didn't grace my home until 2001. Before that, my experiences with computers were confined to school and library labs or the occasional game of *Where in the World Is Carmen Sandiego* on an Apple II without an ethernet cable—a machine my grandfather rescued from the trash heap at work. When the web finally arrived in my den, it came with the familiar melody of dial-up tones and a stack of AOL trial CDs—a common initiation at the turn of the millennium.

It was this addition to the household in the early 2000s that enabled a new understanding of connection and intimacy. While I cherished meaningful relationships with friends at school and in my local community,

the internet offered a different kind of engagement—one that transcended the limitations of my geographic location. For me, the web wasn't an escape or a stage for inventing personas; it became a lifeline—a conduit for forming relationships as my most authentic self, which would profoundly shape my intellectual and emotional well-being. The tens of thousands of hours I spent online in those early years, often deep into the night when sleep was elusive, weren't stolen from "reality"; they were invested in expanding my horizons, engaging in conversations that challenged and enriched me in ways that were less accessible locally through my socioeconomic circumstances.

The year 2003—or perhaps it was 2004—was the pivotal period that really pushed the web into a place that felt as authentic and significant as any I'd ever known. Distance remained irrelevant as conversations with others blossomed through the glow of screens. These interactions evolved into something that, at the time, defied conventional understanding. These bonds weren't cloaked in anonymity or posturing; they were about being truly seen and understood in ways that were only possible through the transcendence of proximity. Our exchanges were electric, minds melded and shared moments felt palpable and vulnerable despite the fact I was somatically solitary.

These bonds with others became cornerstones of my life, the fundamental influences on who I am today. The intellectual stimulation and emotional depth I found online filled a void that my immediate surroundings could not. We shaped each other, leaving imprints that still resonate. I know I wouldn't be the same person if I hadn't spent so much time typing away at those keyboards or reading wild, font-laden paragraphs upon paragraphs of instant messages in return. I genuinely wonder whether I would even have had the opportunity to write this without having experienced these relationships in the early aughts. I have to regularly remind myself I was my own person before I had



Screenshot of *Under Your Desk* (also known as *OFFICE*) by Michaël Samyn and Auriea Harvey, 1999

Entropy8Zuper! flag from Entropy8Zuper.com, created by Entropy8Zuper!, 1999.

access to the internet and that I have something to give as an individual because I had been unfathomably intertwined for so much of my youth with others I had the privilege to meet in the right place at the right time in a particular era of the web.

My experience echoed themes in Auriea Harvey's work—parallels that I only came to internalize in the thick of curating *My Veins Are the Wires, My Body Is Your Keyboard*. Her exploration of digital materialism—the belief that the virtual holds as much substance as the tangible—resonated deeply. In Harvey's *Bientôt l'été*, two kindred spirits meet on a holodeck-simulated beach, their interactions weighted with emotion despite the illusory setting. The game's serene landscapes and fragmented dialogues mirror how virtual spaces can become intimate venues, capturing the nuances of relationships that exist through the wires.

Harvey and Michaël Samyn's self-created online sanctuaries, like *Under Your Desk*, encapsulated the intimacy possible within networked digital space. They captured the essence of what I had lived: individuals, separated by states and countries, weaving a shared reality through threads of code. It makes me wonder how many others have forged connections online so profound they felt like founding nation-states of their own. Harvey and Samyn did, so did we.

The power of Harvey's work lies in its ability to make the virtual palpable, finding those in-between spaces where interaction becomes significant precisely because of the screen. It speaks to a universal experience of seeking connection and intimacy through digital means—a journey shared across generations. Yet it also acknowledges the complexities, the interplay between digital closeness and the absence of haptic touch.

Reflecting on those formative nights, I'm struck by how deeply they shaped my understanding of relationships and the self. The people I met saw me with a clarity that was rare in everyday life, an honesty that fostered deep, lasting connections. They were anchors—so transformative they felt like unspoken promises, their impact indelible despite the passage of time.

Like Harvey and Samyn, the most meaningful online relationships culminated in meeting face-to-face, bridging the gap between the virtual and body in space. At long last, sharing the same space underscored the depth of our connections, affirming that the relationships forged through screens were as real and significant as any other.

It didn’t make the holodeck of it all any less paramount, but it recognized the remaining tension between virtual embodiment and human biology.

More than two decades later, I grapple with the echoes of AOL instant messenger. Time and distance have cast their shadows, sometimes offering happy endings and sometimes leaving devastating, unhealable wounds. But these experiences, woven into the fabric of who I am, raise complex questions about the nature of intimacy, the durability of digital bonds, and how technology both enables and complicates human connection. How does one reconcile the depth of feelings nurtured in virtual spaces with the undeniable realities of corporeal absence? What does it mean to be truly connected when it’s believed that presence is as much about tactile perception as it is about proximity?

As new frontiers of digital interaction continue to unfold, it's impossible not to contemplate how these technologies will shape the next generation's understanding of closeness and connection. The lines between the virtual and the tangible blur more each day, bringing both opportunity and challenge. Honoring the concrete impact these relationships have on our lives requires acknowledging their validity while navigating their unique vulnerabilities.

Auriea Harvey's work invites reflection on these complexities, as do those moments when I look back on my own journey from those early chat rooms to the multifaceted digital landscape we navigate today. Perhaps the most valuable lesson from those formative experiences is the recognition that true connection—whether forged through screens or shared spaces—originates from authenticity, openness, and a willingness to see and be seen without pretense.

Moving forward, it's essential to remember that behind every username and avatar is a person capable of changing the trajectory of our lives. The challenge lies in embracing these connections, understanding their depth, and honoring the ways they shape us. The digital conversations, the formative exchanges that stretched into dawn—they transformed us.

A TO Z

by Sasha Stiles

Nothing aches like no body
to touch, nothing takes up a room

like distance. This world is full
of want: hands outstretched over keys,

signals throbbing, wires longing.
From here to there, you and I exist

as data only, two texts
querying love's material

in desire's private internet,
all words, all font, immortal.

All absence is corporeal.
Fingers insist I'm here, I'm here.

Are you there?
Am I anywhere?

When you type my name,
a hole opens up in the sky, silver window,

and I talk to it, I sculpt myth,
ask time and space to hold us

together. Skinned in warm glass screen,
static hum an ecstasy just past reach —

your ghost, my machine.
My ghost, your machine.

January 2024

Minoriea! Have They Asked You About Your Name?

by Morehshin Allahyari

Photo: *Thanassi Karageorgiou*

In 2012, I came across a video online showing a 3D model suspended in a 3D software, connected to an external machine I knew nothing about. The video proceeded to show the digital model transforming from software into a tangible, solid, plastic object. I watched in amazement as, layer by layer, the machine birthed an object. As if out of science-fiction, the software model was pushed into worldly existence beyond the digital screen.

Nearly 12 years later, I have tried to hold onto what I felt in that magical moment. Ever since, I have not stopped thinking for and through 3D printers and 3D scanners as real and reimagined machines of immense limitations and possibilities that require studying with a critical feminist anti-colonialist lens. In my own art and research projects, such as Material Speculation: ISIS, The 3D Additivist Manifesto, The 3D Additivist Cookbook, and Physical Tactics for Digital Colonialism, I have

tried to develop critical but accessible conversations about the politics of these often techno-optimist, capitalist, and over-hyped machines. My work asks how we can apply a critical lens to analyze the cultural and societal implications of transmuting digital forms into tangible human-scale actions through 3D printing.

How can we adapt and reappropriate technologies such as 3D printers and 3D scanners as tools for reconfiguration and resistance to various power structures?

How can we use these tools for social justice, for poetics, for telling our stories, other kinds of stories, hidden, invisible, underrepresented stories?

What about the materiality embedded into the process of these tools?

From crude oil to plastic; from possessed physical objects to idealized versions of liberated digital 3D models; from bringing a 3D model into a tangible object and taking a tangible object back into a digital 3D printable file, I have wondered over and over: what can we learn from such a fluid process?

When does a transformative process encourage new imaginations, and when might it enact violence or care? And who gets to make those decisions?

It was around 2016 when I came across Auriea Harvey's 3D-printed sculptures, which have gradually mutated to exemplify the kind of groundbreaking art we need to reimagine the possibilities embedded in material and sculptural forms. In her work, Harvey invests in refiguration of past figures, stories, and materials, and engages in a consistent dialogue between form and matter. When I think about the fluidity in Harvey's work, I think about a practice in which the past is potentially now and the present is possibly a past within our reach; in which the lines between fictional and factual, digital and physical, become blurry and full of possibilities or, in Harvey's own words, "an uncanny valley of materiality."

I am especially drawn to Harvey's sculptural figures and characters for the many ways they allow us to assume, speculate on, imagine, and make up our own stories. First, because of the uncanniness of their materialities, which in many ways refuse to be "known"; wood, plastic, resin, ceramic, and other materials combined to create one sculptural form, both through 3D printing and also traditional sculptural creation. Second, because they engage with the many layers of time; in which a sculpture like Minoriea might look like Harvey's own face but also can remind us of a possible historical and mythical figure of the past. Third, because of the multiplicity and interruption of the process, in which Harvey might 3D scan her own face or the legs of an ancient sculpture at a historical museum and 3D print them, and then 3D scan some of those 3D printed models again to input them back into another digital world. And lastly (my favorite) is the echoing, in which she keeps adding on, carving off, reshaping, remodeling, and working the same sculptures to birth new ones.

There is so much that can be read and thought through, so many stories each of us can tell and think with Harvey, in fostering the kind of personal relationships we might want to make with these sculptures. Her creation of these forms (time, space, matter) opens a space that constantly inspires me not only because of my fascination with the 3D printer and 3D scanner's poetic possibilities but also because of how these tools might give us a chance to pass on the new kind of stories we can tell. In a recent Zoom exchange with Auriea, she walked me through her thinking and production of these figures. In my own practice as well as in Auriea's work, I have found that historical figures have the ability to inspire and offer up a much-needed space for holding and reconsidering what might be unfolding in our present time and setting the groundwork for an alternative future.

For all these reasons, and with Auriea's generous permission to dream together as friends and colleagues, I have created my own correspondences with these sculptural figures. My hope is that by birthing these mysterious, powerful, and monstrous human figures into our world, first through a machine and then through storytelling, we will unlock something for our world's collective healing, especially during these despairing times. Writing for them here is my one attempt.

To start with you, Minoriea, is to start with the story of creation. I've tried to choose you, the most deserving one, the most sublime. I read it in a book, and it felt like you must hear it too:

"The world was once a flow that fused into a mass of rocks we know as mountains. The mountains rested on the two horns of a bull, who stood on the back of a fish. The fish, in turn, balanced on the wings of an angel."

Minoriea, 2018
Photograph by bitform
Minoriea v1-dv3, 2021
3D Model

Minoriea! I am told you were the first; the first to embrace this everlasting axis of a monster and a human. I look at you, and I can see the tension between all the paths that overlap and all the ones collapsing. They say the ghost of you symbolizes our deepest fears and desires, lurking in the shadowy labyrinth of our unconscious. I see you, and I understand the reasons you have chosen to stay still, centered; gazing down like that. What might one make of your tilted head other than it taking on the burden to hold the weight of the mountains, the weight of the universe? It is impossible to not see how strong and humble that makes you look, bowing with such dignity.

Minoriea! Have they asked you about your name? I want to know why you must sing it so deliberately into every ear. I hear it, and I am in pursuit of more words.

"You are the path you tread.
Only the blind one sees the truth."

You tell that to Ram who is Fauna's sister.

Fauna who is your soulmate.
You tell that to the Red-Ram who is your grandmother; who is your ancestor;
You tell your kins: the porcelain Ram and the Earthy Ram, and the White and Blue Ram, who are all showing up, one by one, to be the many echoes of you.
You tell the twins Fauna-Ram who mirror each other; who mirror each other to repeat you.
I need to know how it feels to live in such solidarity with your people, to love in such closeness to unity.

Fauna, 2018
Photograph by bitform
Fauna v1-dv1, 2020
3D Model

Ram! When was it that you decided to tell *Minoriea all your secrets?* The ones that make you into a shapeshifter, a time bender. How old were you when you were chosen to be the one carrying the kind of bravery that allows others to behold themselves in your reflection? Every matter, every skin you wear, is for a story you must hold onto; every layer is an attempt to remember oneself. Tell me why you became her. Why she became you. How is it that you get to be one in many?

"Ram is always broken," she says. And what she means is that brokenness is your most divine quality. What she means is that: *freedom is not free*. The world's cruelest are the untouched people, people who have never had to truly fight for a thing; the empty people; the silent people. Only if they had your wisdom of the past, only if they stayed open enough to hear their ancestors; the ones calling to say: "Your Silence Will Not Protect You." That's why your brokenness has such beauty. Just like Amanirenas; or Polyphemau, or Cyclops; the army of suffering, broken, imperfect, one-eyed warriors!

RAM I, 2020
Photograph by bitform
RAM v2-dv1, 2021
3D Model

Cyclops! They want to know why you were born into the world with only one eye. They want to know if your story is about the living or the dead. I think it might be about those who have chosen to live in between. Your story is about a refusal, a refusal to choose between binaries. Your refusal to stay in cozy zones; greedy dreams; sheltered assumptions.

Cyclops! It is you they are out to make a villain, a savage, a wronger. It is you they chose to make a case of in their cricket history. It is you they told the world to be wary of; they told them you are the most dangerous, the animal, the children of the dark.

Cyclops! I look at you, and I see that every day you wake up with that strange/estranged, queer, imperfect (but perfect), broken (but whole) body of yours, to fight for your freedom; to tell your true story. One day, they will understand why you had to keep going; they will read (with shame) into the maps and paths that your life, your words, your nightmares, and dreams left for them. It will be known why killing you was never an option. Resilience is immortal.

Cyclops, 2021
Photograph by bitform

Cyclops v1-dv1, 2021
3D Model

Ox! I must end this story with you. Sitting, waiting with such serenity to be all that was, all that is, for all that will become. I look at you and time loses its dimension. I look at you, and I see a new story of creation. Your story of creation is a story of re-reimagination. It's a story about what if and how else in its most true form; it's a story of motherhood, womanhood, sisterhood, queerhood, childhood. Just like Minoriea, who gave birth to it all, your story is about standing, resting, balancing, holding, and protecting.

Your story is about

"define and empower rather than divide and conquer."

You are Minoriea, Ram, Fauna, Cyclops, and much more, all at once. You are everyone and anyone willing to turn their head looking back to *feel what must be felt* in the present to move toward the future.

You are the flow we need; the lineage of what our ancestors remind us to be; to look for; to stand with, and toward. You are the protector of every child, born and unborn, dead and alive, injured and uninjured; given a chance to dream otherwise.

Ox, 2020
Photograph by bitform

Ox v1-dv1, 2021
3D Model

INTERVIEW

with Auriea Harvey and Jon Ippolito
by Regina Harsanyi

For the exhibition *Auriea Harvey: My Veins Are the Wires, My Body Is Your Keyboard*, Regina Harsanyi spoke with Jon Ippolito and the artist about institutional support for networked art in the 1990s and early 2000s. Their conversation traces the evolution of art on the World Wide Web, from early days centered around mailing lists and collectives, to the fleeting dalliance museums offered before withdrawing significant support after the dot-com crash.

Ippolito recounts his behind-the-scenes efforts to advocate for digital arts within museums, where the art form continues to be treated as peripheral in comparison with more traditional media. Harvey describes memories of egalitarian artist communities expressing themselves online, unconcerned with the commercial pressures faced by their institutional counterparts. Their dialogue highlights the utopian ideals of networked art of the era, largely lost by the mid-2000s.

Regina Harsanyi (RH): Jon, I wanted to start by asking you to discuss, from a curatorial perspective, the landscape of what you would have defined as net art circa 1994 to 1999. What was exciting about it for you? Did you feel supported by institutions or were you on your own?

Jon Ippolito (JI): Much of what I did at the Guggenheim involved engineering things behind the scenes and under the radar. These efforts proved important later, but at the time, they were not considered significant. When people began creating art online, I was aware of the art shared on the Nettime mailing list. This was crucial as it showcased many of the leading figures in European net art at the time. Then, with a bit of a delay, New York began to develop a contingent of internet artists that grew to rival their European counterparts, leading to more interaction between the two. In my museum work, I began exploring how we could engage with this new medium, questioning whether the Guggenheim could truly promote and nourish this type of work. By saying "under the radar," I mean that whenever I proposed these ideas early

on, people would respond, "Yeah, but make sure you do this other, more important, curatorial work first." So, it was a side project of sorts. I should also note that many of us coded websites by hand and figured out how to host them through local organizations—back then, museums didn't have their own websites. Similarly, much of what Auriea created early on was hand-typed HTML.

RH: As a curator working now, I feel we're still advocating for media art. Were you all even using the term net art? And do you still feel like that's a relevant term to discuss Auriea's work?

Auriea Harvey (AH): I remember that this was a controversial topic even back then. The term "net.art" referred to a very specific strand of net art associated with artists like Olia Lialina, Vuk Ćosić, and Alexei Shulgin. And then there was "net art" and "web art." Early on, there were quite contextualized, nuanced ways of talking about net artwork. So, someone in New York City would rarely, if ever, say they made "net.art," but they would say they made "net art." This distinction quickly changed, of course, but I'm talking about the years 1996–1998, the very early days. It wasn't until Rhizome got going in New York City that things began to take off. But when I first arrived in '96, '97, there was very little happening. I left in '99. However, institutions like Whitney and the Guggenheim were catching on early. And Jon, when I met you, it was as part of Shu Lea Cheang's Brandon Project. But let's not forget, I was around 24 or 25, fresh out of university, out of art school, and was drawn to the internet arts because they were welcoming. It was a way for me to actively contribute, which seemed impossible to navigate in New York City's art scene at that time.

RH: How did you meet Shu Lea?

AH: I think she just emailed me like everybody else. Everyone emailed everyone. It was such a small world at that moment that if you did anything important, anything online that showed you were serious about it, then people would contact you. We knew each other; everybody knew everybody. That's how I got involved. But I was surprised. I was just like, "Wow, the Guggenheim is involved in this?" It seemed very strange. I thought it meant a lot of things. I thought it meant that now I could just make net art and it would be accepted by an institution. It quickly turned into like, okay, no, that's not how that works. I know there was some moment of disillusionment there. But then there was the Whitney Biennial, which I didn't take part in because of that. That was in '99. The idea that they were going to record a playthrough of the websites—I couldn't deal with that. Michaël [Samyn] and I couldn't deal with the idea of people not being able to interact themselves and not being encouraged to interact, but to treat it as if it was a video program. So, I think that was another disconnect in the institution's understanding of what they were showing.

JI: In the early days of the web, nobody even had a web domain. In '94, my first web art piece was hosted on MSN or something, which at the time wasn't

even part of the regular internet. There's this interesting statistic that Robert Atkins quoted, which I later looked up and found evidence for, which was that in 1995 eight percent of websites were owned by artists or created by artists. That's just incredible, right? It's like walking down the street and one out of every ten stores is like an artist's studio. We were kind of like artists in, not a commune, but sort of like a community. So, you had Entropy8, Michaël had Zuper!, and there were all these other names. But web domains became a really important piece of the creative puzzle. Back then, it wasn't like we now have this sort of monolithic website where we just sort of take Chrome and everything for granted. We took nothing for granted; the code under the hood, the navigation, the way you accessed it, that was all accepted as part of the artist's palette. So, like, Olia Lialina has this great essay, called "Location='Yes'." Do you remember that?

AH: Yeah, it's classic because she is the one person who really talked about these things, wrote about these things.

JI: So, artists were using the location bar in your browser as another canvas. And they do things like have it spin from one page to another and create animations with just the text that would appear. And she noted that there's a particular arithmetic, she called it, of web domains. And she said, when Entropy8.com and Zuper.com merged, they became Entropy8zuper.org. So, she said, dot com plus .com equals .org. It's interesting. And I think that it sort of shows the evolution of how you guys were ahead of the curve.

AH: The essay was titled "Location='Yes'" because museums and other venues wanting to showcase an artist's work had a common practice. People would say, "Oh, I have a website, can I put your artwork on it?" and the typical response would be, "Oh, sure." But when you clicked on a piece by an artist like Heath Bunting or Alexei Shulgin, it would open up in a new window. Sometimes, the domain name and URL were crucial to the artwork, and the JavaScript call—or perhaps it was an HTML call—allowed you to choose the characteristics of the window that would open. This included details such as whether you could resize it or if it had scroll bars. Many preferred the window without scroll bars, wanting it to be well-defined, so they chose "location=no," which was a way of saying, "Hide the browser chrome, hide the location bar, and make it look just like a picture frame." But I believed that the constraints of the internet that are visible at the border of a browser window are important to the artistic project.

One of my favorite pieces of net art is "Agatha Appears," which doesn't function the same way now as it used to. It took you on a journey around the world through the location bar by storing the pages on different servers around the globe. I've always found that to be a truly beautiful way of understanding the poetics of navigation. Anyway, we were discussing something else: institutional support in the '90s. There was this

Still image from "Freezing," from *skinonskinonskin*, 1999

golden age from around 1994 to 2001 when it felt like this new medium could be understood. But then something happened.

JI: I think one reason artists were so excited in the '90s was the potential for a community and audience outside the traditional gatekeepers. But for much of the rest of the world, the excitement was about e-commerce and the prospect of making money. The kind of crassness and focus on high prices, speculation, and investment that characterized the brick-and-mortar art world was not as prevalent in the net art world. However, there was still attention from journalists, who often focused on whether you made money from your work and how you planned to sell it. That seemed to be the main discourse in mainstream press articles examining these matters. The prevailing notion was that if all these dot.com companies like Yahoo and Alta Vista were making money, shouldn't artists be doing the same with their websites? Ironically, even though artists were among the first to explore the internet, it was really hard to make money from websites. By 2000, I could count on one hand the number of people who made money from websites as pure artworks.

AH: This is the same thing we were trying to do with *skinonskinonskin*. When we worked with hell.com to make the pay-per-view version, we felt like, "Why would we let people view this very personal website, this piece of artwork, for free?" And why not? Given its nature—being about love and sex and all these themes—we found a payment processor that was used by porn sites and used that to charge money for access to the site. It was the first time artists dared to do something like this, I think. But it was exactly the dynamics

you're talking about, like, "Well, people pay to see a movie, people pay for other experiences." So, we were trying to figure out on the one hand how we could protect the work, from people who were just surfing through. We didn't want people to view the work that way. We wanted people to have skin in the game, so to speak. When they were going to see the work, they were going to have to look because they just paid ten bucks to see it.

JI: After 2002 and the dot.com bust, I really felt like the art world completely withdrew from digital art. Then some commercially astute artists adopted the label "post-internet art," a term coined by Marisa Olsen, which became very gallery friendly. Despite the term implying "art after the internet," it was interpreted as a move away from internet art towards more sellable forms. Some artists who still wanted to work online migrated to platforms like Instagram and MySpace during the rise of social media. Others transformed their net art into apps, which was quite innovative. For example, LIA created apps that were originally animations in Director on websites, and I still have them on my phone. Scott Snibby developed a piece called "Gravilux," which he had created earlier but then adapted into an iPhone and iPad app. It became the number one free iPad app in the Apple App Store, surpassing all TV stations in the entertainment category. It was downloaded half a million times. This shows that net artists sought new venues to achieve what they wanted from net art. Some pursued commercial success in galleries, while others aimed for reach and audience engagement. By the early 2000s, it seemed that museums had dropped the ball, largely abandoning digital art.

AH: It was really harsh. One minute, you're awarded some giant prize and being commissioned by a museum, and the next, Gallery 9 is shutting down on the Walker Art Center's site, which was painful because that was a beautiful collection.

RH: Was the institutional thinking at the time, like, it's not important to us, so we don't need to hire somebody else to take that over?

AH: It was completely disheartening. They underestimated the cultural importance of everything they had been doing.

JI: I would say this was a sea change that followed the money. The Guggenheim had big internet-related initiatives that were commercially focused. There was the Guggenheim Virtual Museum and Guggenheim.com, which at the time was one of the best-designed interactive experiences. But both just died. It was like they took a giant broom and swept out all the media curators, along with the dot.coms' money and attention.

AH: As an artist, you were expected to donate your webpage for preservation. Museums would say, "We're going to collect your website," with contracts and all, but they didn't just target art websites. They also targeted designers doing notable work because there were lots of design-focused sites that were

Still from "Numbers" (2002), a chapter of *Godlove Museum* (1999–2006) by Entropy8Zuper!

hugely popular. All these names are now lost, like tears in the rain. We never got to the bottom of it. They wanted to collect the *Godlove Museum*, and we said, "Okay, $3000 per site." They refused to pay, and I'm just like, "Why not?" You would pay for a sculpture, right? This is where I think the fluidity of the media got in our way.

JI: And that's the mindset that infected the art world at that time around collecting things. Aaron Batsky collected websites by taking screenshots and putting them on a CD, which is what we were against.

AH: We refused that because we were just like, what are they even talking about?

JI: I remember that Whitney Biennial. I don't remember any of the other pieces, just the fact that Auriea wasn't in it. Because she's like, "If you don't let people interact with this in a browser, as the web is meant to be experienced, then it's not really net art."

RH: So that brings us back to how radical Auriea's works were, like *Wirefire* with Michaël Samyn. *Eden.Garden* still seems radical even for today.

JI: There was a shiny, minimalist aesthetic linked to technology at that time. The web was created by scientists, and the early HTML form elements reflected that: super clunky, gray rectangles. Many web artists worked with these constraints. Auriea and Michaël presented a completely different aesthetic, blasting you with baroque, sumptuous imagery. In the "Real-Time Art Manifesto," it says, "Do not fear beauty, do not fear pleasure." That sensuality was so different from the digital austerity of the time. Auriea's move to Rome was consistent with that sensuality, reminiscent of Bernini's work, bringing a bodily romanticism to the web.

RH: I continue not to see this style elsewhere on the web, especially not from that time period, except in Auriea's art.

AH: Michaël probably wouldn't have labeled us as net artists, due to our different perspective on what net.art was about. Net.art engaged with the internet and computers as a technical medium that artists grappled with. Our interest wasn't in the computers themselves; we saw them more as conduits rather than tools that needed

commentary. Whereas much of the net.art was about the internet as a meta subject, for us it was not a subject for dissection. Our interaction with the internet was akin to a romantic love affair happening through the wires. And it was quite literal for us, but we also felt this romanticism about the internet itself, which is what *Eden.Garden* was about. It's poetically coincidental that it all happened in 2001, right before the collapse of the dot.com bubble and the art world's retreat from digital art.

Still from *Eden.Garden* by Entropy8Zuper, 2001

Eden.Garden can't be resurrected, and in that there's poetry too. We were trying to prove that there was freedom here, that you had a choice about what digital art could be. For us, it meant that if we wanted to create a real-time world in a browser, we could. And we did. It was about taking the historical HTML data and tags and transforming them into a garden—a garden that exists beyond, inside, behind every webpage. It was a utopia with animals and Adam and Eve dancing. Yet, you were the snake. What you can't see in the videos is that when you navigate, you're not Adam or Eve; they dance around while, clicking on other objects like an eagle,

you embody the snake, slithering around in the garden. To us, this was a poetic expression of the web being a paradise, and we wanted to visualize and demonstrate that paradise. We wanted to show that it was possible to create something immersive in real time, akin to a video game, right there in the browser, constructed from the browser's own elements. It wasn't about the browser; it was about the paradisiacal experience.

The essence of our work was to reach the heart of the matter, which was the people. When we were running Entropy8Zuper! and visualizing the visitors to our website, we aimed to highlight the simultaneous presence of everyone, to evoke a sense of connection. With *Wirefire*, we wanted to emphasize the live, shared moment. It wasn't about computing; it was about feeling the connection. Now, such connectivity is often taken for granted, but back then, it was vital for us to highlight these connections. I don't take it for granted at all; I still feel it's missing from much of the web.

RH: A major theme for *My Veins Are the Wires, My Body Is Your Keyboard* is the intimate affordances of a digital network, in contrast to what is lost, in my opinion, at least—the haptic connection. Auriea has explored this in many works, ranging from *skinonskinonskin* to these multimodal 3D models, which quite literally materialize into something haptic. What are your thoughts, Jon, on this contrast between virtual and tangible, and its relationship to intimacy, especially in Auriea's work, but also in general, like the evolution of that on the web?

JI: It's about merging them: can we find a way to connect to others? How can I make this bridge between one body and another? So, we're not just talking about romanticism. It's a really sensual, even sexual connection. And when I look at these works, especially *Wirefire*, I think this evolved into platforms like Twitch and OnlyFans. This turned into ways that people are connecting over the web bodily. And we might say, "Oh, that's not real romance or real sensuality," but it is. You can't deny that it's a significant way in which people interact now. And for better or worse, Auriea and Michaël pioneered this entire realm of ways of interacting. And if we think about the body—skin on skin—we think about touching someone, feeling warmth, that kind of haptic presence, which isn't really part of their work. But we also think about nonverbal communication. How do you represent a feeling in a way that doesn't use words? Especially in body language and that sort of thing. And I have to say, of all of Auriea and Michael's pieces, I've spent probably a hundred times as much time in *Endless Forest*, which to me, is like the evolved version of *Eden.Garden*. It's this incredible painterly landscape that you can just wander through, a completely open game with no goals, no points to score. I showed it to my kids when they were very young, because I was one of those parents who's like, "Don't do what I do." They were entranced by it. I know, Auriea, you have a huge fandom that stems from teen girls who played this game online. Can you talk a little bit about that?

AH: By the time we developed *Eden. Garden*, we were visualizing a utopia we knew wasn't truly one. *The Endless Forest* then became this world that existed continuously, whether we were present or not. As long as the server ran, the world existed. We wanted to create a space where people could understand that comprehension isn't necessary for connection, exploring what digital body language could be. In my current work, before I can show you a virtual sculpture, I need to first create your digital hands to manipulate it. This means I must consider the haptics of this virtual object. Whether it's in a browser or in augmented reality (AR), I believe there's a beautiful, bodily gesture towards a digital object. Despite it being a simple illusion viewed through a phone, if given a moment, it feels present and connects with you. This thread, the presence of something intangible yet felt runs through all my work. When Michaël and I were developing *Wirefire*, texting through AOL Instant Messenger wasn't enough for our long-distance relationship across

countries. We needed a tool to touch each other, metaphorically, which led to *Wirefire*. This evolved into *The Endless Forest*, where we sought to help others understand each other through digital means.

Now, as I create sculptural works, they feel new to me and are more challenging to dissect. Yet I know they carry the concept of touch, of trying to make a tactile surface that, while intangible, has a baroque richness to its imagined textures. It's about helping you to project yourself onto the surface of an object or character, half alive or pretending to be, and to understand its virtual life. I'm also exploring how people can connect through experiencing an object over time, which is a profound aspect of sculpture. Sculpture transcends time simply by existing; places like Rome exemplify this. Standing in front of ancient creations, knowing that artists like Rubens or Michelangelo have stood before them, you feel a connection across centuries. My aim is to create a digital object that achieves this same timelessness, an existence as data communicated via the web, traveling around the world.

JI: Living in Rome, seeing great art, one sculpture that stuck with me was Michelangelo's Moses. Walking into that chapel, amidst all the sculptures, there was Moses, staring back at me, a living piece of stone. That experience illustrates the depth of connection that can be forged, even at a distance. And that's what I see as one of the projects Auriea and Michaël have explored—how far can we push that connection between two bodies? Whether through JavaScript or clay and 3D printing, the notion of nonverbal communication and connection remains resonant. The subject isn't the media itself; it's people, human connections, love, beauty. The aura of a physical sculpture may be apparent, but what about the aura of a digital object? That's what Olia was trying to create with "Location= 'Yes'", giving a special presence to data. Auriea and Michaël 's aim was to show that data is intimate, important. Today, this idea might be more widely understood, though it's somewhat lost with the focus on NFTs and their monetization.

RH: Jon, how has your approach to curating and understanding net art evolved? If you worked at an institution now, how might your approach differ?

JI: We have new tools we didn't have before, like emulation, which is an incredibly powerful way to resurrect works from the past. The Rhizome's Net Art Anthology, for instance, includes an emulation of *skinonskinonskin*, right? While giving a talk at Yale at some preservation conference, I faced a dilemma. I wanted to show an emulation of an old work of mine but couldn't get the emulators to work. Dragan suggested I could "borrow" an emulator from a piece on the Rhizome website. So, I went and found *skinonskinonskin* and literally changed the location to my own work to use the Netscape 2 emulator. It was amazing to realize we can do that. That things are porous in this way, and we can take advantage of it. But we must also remember we're still combating the hardening of categories

or the "rigor mortis" of media. It's not just that media become obsolete; it's that over time, people's minds harden, their expectations diminish, and their range of options narrows.

From an institutional perspective, particularly in museums, it's sad that people still think in terms of collecting physical objects. Curators' mindsets have expanded, but the tools they use haven't necessarily kept pace. This monoculture led to a big disaster a couple of weeks ago, which I won't delve into. But the concept of monoculture, borrowed from sustainable agriculture, teaches us that it's harmful to plant only one type of crop. It depletes the soil, hampers collaborative growth, and makes it easy for pests to devastate crops. Similarly, a technological monoculture is detrimental, and that's what we're seeing in much of the web today. We must fight this trend in today's museums.

RH: Thank you both so much.

JI: So, I have to end on one note. This is the quote that I start my web applications class with: "The original idea of the web was that it should be a collaborative space where you can communicate through sharing information. The web is more a social creation than a technical one. It ought to be like clay, rather than a sculpture that you observe from a distance."—Tim Berners-Lee.

AH: What a pleasure to talk to you both. And I do want to thank you once again for this idea about variable media and emulation, which I didn't appreciate in the late '90s. But as someone who later made video games and wanted to see things continue, this notion of emulation suddenly being possible and seeing old works revived has been so important to me. It's been beautiful to see that these things are still there, that this data still functions. Like I kept telling Regina, we never deleted anything; it just stopped working. It's wonderful that it can be brought back, and I hope institutions will embrace this idea to show works in their original context, in their original browsers, rather than feeling like everything has to be remade all the time.

REAL-TIME ART MANIFESTO

In 2006, artists Auriea Harvey and Michaël Samyn presented their *Real-Time Art Manifesto* at the Mediaterra Festival of Art and Technology in Athens. The manifesto urged artists to embrace real-time 3D technology, such as that used in game engines as legitimate artistic media, independent of commercial gaming applications. Republished here in 2024, the manifesto's vision has largely been realized in media arts—its call for artistic adoption of real-time 3D tools has influenced a generation of artists and reshaped contemporary art practices.

I.

Realtime 3D is a medium for artistic expression.

Games are not the only things you can make with realtime 3D technology.
And modification of commercial games is not the only option accessible to artists.

Realtime 3D is the most remarkable new creative technology since oil on canvas.
It is much too important to remain in the hands of toy makers and propaganda machines.
We need to rip the technology out of their greedy claws and put them to shame by producing the most stunning art to grace this planet so far.
(And claim the name “game” for what we do even if it is inappropriate.)
Real-time 3D interactives can be an art form unto themselves.

II.
Be an author.

Do not hide behind the freedom of the user in an interactive environment to ignore your responsibility as a creator.
This only ends in confirming cliches.
Do not design in board room meetings or give marketeers creative power.
Your work needs to come from a singular vision and be driven by a personal passion.
Do not delegate direction jobs.
Be a dictator.
But collaborate with artisans more skilled than you.

Ignore the critics and the fanboys.
Make work for your audience instead.
Embrace the ambiguity that the realtime medium excels in.
Leave interpretation open where appropriate
but keep the user focused and immersed the worlds that you create.

Commercial games are conservative, both in design as in mentality.
They eschew authorship, pretending to offer the player a neutral vessel to take him or her through the virtual world.
But the refusal to author results in a mimicking of generally accepted notions, of television and other mass media.
Banality.
Reject pure commercialism.
Individual elements of many commercial games made with craft and care produce artistic effects
but the overall product is not art.
Some commercial games have artistic moments,
but we need to go further.

Step one: drop the requirement of making a game.

The game structure of rules and competition stands in the way of expressiveness.
Interactivity wants to be free.

Gaming stands in the way of playing.
There are so many other ways of interacting in virtual environments.
We have only just begun to discover the possibilities.
Games are games.

They are ancient forms of play that have their place in our societies.
But they are by far not the only things one can do with realtime technologies.

Stop making games.
Be an author.

III.

Create a total experience.

Do not render!

All elements serve the realisation of the piece as a whole.
Models, textures, sound, interaction, environment, atmosphere,
drama, story, programming
are all equally important.
Do not rely on static renderings.
Everything happens in real time.
The visuals as well as the logic.
Create multi-sensorial experiences.
Simulate sensorial sensations for which output hardware does not exist (yet).
Make the experience feel real
(it does not need to look real).
Do not imitate other media but develop an aesthetic style that is unique.

Make the activity that the user spends most time doing the most interesting one in the game.
It's not about the individual elements but about the total effect of the environment.
The sum of its parts.
In the end the work is judged by the quality of authorship
and not by its individual elements.

Models, textures, sound, interaction design, environment design, atmosphere, drama, story, programming.
Together without hierarchy.
No element can be singled out. All are equally important.
Create a simulated multi-sensorial experience. Not only a picture.
Or only a game.
Or only a soundtrack.

IV.

Embed the user in the environment.

The user is not disembodied in virtual space
but takes the body into the experience.
The avatar is not a neutral vessel but allows the user
to navigate
not only through the virtual space
but also through the narrative content.
Interaction is the link between the user and the piece.
Provide for references
(both conceptual and sensorial)
to connect the user to the environment.
Reject abstraction.
Make the user feel at home.
(and then play with his
or her
expectations
-just don't start with alienation,
the real world is alienationg enough as it is)

Reject the body-mind duality.
The user is the center of the experience.
Think "architecture," not "film."

Interaction is pivotal
to "put the user in the environment".
The user is not disembodied but is provided with a
device
(similar to a diving suit or astronaut's outfit)
which allows him
or her
to visit a place that would otherwise not be accessible.
You bring your body with you to this place,
or at least your memories of it.

Strictly speaking, our output media only allow for the
reproduction of visuals and sound .
But real-time interaction and processing can help us
to achieve simulation of touch, smell and taste as well,
through visuals and sound.
In fact, force feedback already provides for a way to
communicate with touch.
And the activity of fingers on the mouse or hands
holding a joystick allows for physical communication.
Don't underestimate this connection.
From the USB port to the joystick. Through the hand
to the nervous system.
One network.

Soon as smell and taste can be reproduced,
those media can quickly be incorporated into our
technology.

The virtual place is not necessarily alien.
On the contrary:
It can deal with any subject.
References to the real world
(of nature as well as culture)
(both conceptual and sensorial)
create links between the environment and the user.
Since interaction is pivotal, these links are crucial.

Make it feel real, not necessarily look real.

Develop a unique language for the realtime 3D
medium and do not fall in MacLuhan's trap
(don't allow any old medium to become the content of
the new)
Imitate life and not photography, or drawings, or
comic strips or even old-school games.
Realism does not equal photo-realism!
In a multisensory medium, realism is a multisensory
experience:

It has to feel real.

Stories ground people in culture,
(and remove the alienation that causes aggression)
stimulate their imagination,
(and therefore improve the capability to change)
teach them about themselves
and connect them with each other.
Stories are a vital element of society.

Embrace non-linearity.
Let go of the idea of plot.
Realtime is non-linear.
Tell the story through interaction.
Do not use in-game movies or other non-realtime devices to tell the story.
Do not create a "drama manager": let go of plot!
Plot is not compatible with realtime.

Think "poetry," not "prose."

The ancient Greek philosopher Aristotle recognized six elements in Drama.
PLOT
what happens in a play, the order of events,
is only one of them.
Next to plot we have
THEME
or the main idea in the work
CHARACTER
or the personality or role played by an actor
DICTION
the choice and delivery of words
MUSIC/RHYTHM
the sound, rhythm and melody of what is being said
SPECTACLE
the visual elements of the work.
All of these can be useful in non-linear realtime experiences. Except plot.

But the realtime medium offers additional elements that easily augment or replace plot.
INTERACTIVITY
the direct influence of the viewer on the work
IMMERSION
the presence of the viewer in the work
AN AUDIENCE OF ONE
every staging of the work is done for an audience of a single person in the privacy of his
or her
home.

These new elements add the viewer as an active participant to the experience.
This is not a reduction of the idea of story but an enrichment.
Realtime media allow us to tell stories that could not be told before.

Many of the mythical fantasies about art can now be made real.
Now we can step into paintings and become part of them.
Now sculptures can come alive and talk to us.
Now we walk onto the stage and take part in the action.
We can live the lives of romance characters.
Be the poet
or the muse.

Do not reject storytelling in realtime because it is not straightforward.
Realtime media allow us to make ambiguity and imagination active parts of the experience.
Embrace the ambiguity:
it is enriching.
The realtime medium allows for telling stories that cannot be told in any other language.

But realtime is not suitable for linear stories:

Embrace non-linearity!
Reject plot!

Realtime is a poetic technology.
Populate the virtual world with narrative elements that allow the player to make up his or her own story.
Imagination moves the story into the user's mind.
It allows the story to penetrate the surface and take its place amongst the user's thoughts & memories.

The bulk of your story should be told in realtime, through interaction.
Do not use in-game movies or other devices.
Do not fall back on a machine to create plot on the fly:
let go of plot,
plot is not compatible with realtime.

Do not squeeze the realtime medium into a linear frame.
Stories in games are not impossible or irrelevant, even if "all that matters is gameplay."
Humans need stories and will find stories in everything.
Use this to your advantage.
Yes, "all that matters is gameplay,"
if you extend gameplay to mean all interaction in the game.
Because it is through this interaction that the realtime medium will tell its stories.

The situation is the story.
Choose your characters and environment carefully so that the situation immediately triggers narrative associations in the mind of the user.

VI.
Interactivity wants to be free.

Don’t make games.

The rule-based structure and competitive elements in traditional game design stand in the way of expressiveness.
And often, ironically, rules get in the way of playfulness (playfulness is required for an artistic experience!).

Express yourself through interactivity.
Interactivity is the one unique element of the realtime medium.
The one thing that no other medium can do better.
It should be at the center of your creation.

Interactivity design rule number one:
the thing you do most in the game, should be the thing that is most interesting to do.

i.e., If it takes a long time to walk between puzzles, the walk should be more interesting than the puzzles.

VII.

Don't make modern art.

Modern art tends to be ironical, cynical, self referential, afraid of beauty, afraid of meaning
-other than the trendy discourse of the day-,
afraid of technology, anti-artistry.
Furthermore contemporary art is a marginal niche.
The audience is elsewhere.
Go to them rather then expecting them to come to the museum.
Contemporary art is a style, a genre, a format.
Think!

Do not fear beauty.
Do not fear pleasure.

Make art-games, not game-art.
Game art is just modern art
-ironical, cynical, afraid of beauty, afraid of meaning.
It abuses a technology that has already spawned an art form capable of communicating far beyond the reach of modern art.
Made by artists far superior in artistry and skills.
Game art is slave art.

Realtime media are craving your input, your visions.
Real people are starving for meaningful experiences.
And what's more:

society needs you.

Contemporary civilisations are declining at an unsurpassed rate.
Fundamentalism.
Fascism.
Populism.
War.
Pollution.
The world is collapsing while the Artists twiddle their thumbs in the museums.

Step into the world.
Into the private worlds of individuals.
Share your vision.

Connect.
Connect.
Communicate.

VIII.
Reject conceptualism.

Make art for people,
not for documentation.
Make art to experience
and not to read about.
Use the language of your medium to communicate all there is to know.
The user should never be required to read a description or a manual.

Don't parody things that are better than you.

Parodies of commercial games are ridiculous if their technology, craft and artistry do not match up with the original.
Don't settle yourself in the position of the underdog: surpass them!
Go over their heads!
Dominate them!
Show them how it's done!

Put the artistry back in Art.
Reject conceptualism.
Make art for people, not for documentation.
Make art to experience and not art to read about.

Use the language of your work to communicate its content.

The audience should never be required to read the description.
The work should communicate all that is required to understand it.

IX.

Embrace technology.

Don't be afraid of technology,
and least of all, don't make art about this fear.
It's futile.
Technology is not nature. Technology is not god.
It's a thing.
Made for people by people.
Grab it. Use it.

Software is infinitely reproducible and easy to distribute.
Reject the notion of scarcity.
Embrace the abundance that the digital allows for.
The uniqueness of realtime is in the experience.

Cut out the middle man: deliver your productions
directly to the users.
Do not depend on galleries, museums, festivals or
publishers.

Technology-based art should not be about technology:
it should be about life, death and the human condition.

Embrace technology, make it yours!

Use machines to make art for humans, not vice versa.

Make software!
Software is infinitely reproducable
(there is no original; uniqueness is not required
-the uniqueness is in the experience)
Distribution of software is easy through the internet or
portable data containers
(no elitism; no museums, galleries, or festivals; from
creator to audience without mediation -and from
the audience back to the creator, through the same
distribution media)

X.

Develop a punk economy.

Don't shy away from competition with commercial developers.
Your work offers something that theirs does not:
originality of design,
depth of content,
alternative aesthetics.
Don't worry about the polish too much.
Get the big picture right.

"Reduce the volume, Increase the quality and density" (Fumito Ueda)

Make short and intense games:
think haiku, not epic.
Think poetry, not prose.

Embrace punk aesthetics.

But don't become too dependent on government or industry funding:
it is unreliable.
Sell your work directly to your audience.
And use alternative distribution methods that do not require enormous sales figures to break even.

Consider self-publishing and digital distribution.
Avoid retail and traditional games publishers.
Together they take so great a cut
that it requires you to sell hundreds of thousands of copies to make your production investment back.

Do not allow institutional or economic control of your intellectual property, ideas, technology and inventions.

Don't depend on government support or the arts world exclusively.
Sell your games!
Communicate with your audience directly:
cut out the middle man.
Let the audience support your work.

Communicate.

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It has been a great joy to organize ***Auriea Harvey: My Veins Are the Wires, My Body Is Your Keyboard***, a celebration of the artist's remarkable, ongoing career. It would not have been possible without the contributions and support of many individuals and organizations.

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— Regina Harsanyi

CONTRIBUTOR BIOGRAPHIES

Morehshin Allahyari (Persian: مورەه شیٰن اللەیاریٰ) is a New York– and Oakland–based Iranian-Kurdish artist using 3D simulation, video, sculpture, and digital fabrication as tools to re-figure myth and history. Through archival practices and storytelling, her work weaves together complex counternarratives in opposition to the lasting influence of Western technological colonialism in the context of MENA (Middle East and North Africa). Her work has been featured in the Venice Biennale di Architettura, New Museum, the Whitney Museum of American Art, Pompidou Center, Museum of Contemporary Art in Montreal, Tate Modern, Queens Museum, and Dallas Museum of Art. She has been an artist in residence at Carnegie Mellon University's STUDIO for Creative Inquiry, Autodesk Pier9 Workshop in San Francisco, the Vilém Flusser Residency Program for Artistic Research in association with Transmediale, Berlin, Eyebeam's one year Research Residency, Pioneer Works, and Harvest Works. Her work has been featured in *Art21, The New York Times, BBC, Huffington Post, Wired, National Public Radio, Parkett Art Magazine, Frieze, Rhizome, Hyperallergic,* and *Al Jazeera,* among others.

Regina Harsanyi is the Associate Curator of Media Arts at Museum of the Moving Image. She also advises artist studios, art museums, galleries, auction houses, and private collectors on preventive conservation for variable media arts, from plastics to distributed ledger technologies. Harsanyi previously facilitated over 200 exhibitions with a creative technology focus as Director of Programming at Wallplay after working as a Registrar at Sotheby's. She is a graduate of New York University's Institute of Fine Arts, has taught at School of the Art Institute of Chicago, Columbia University, and lectures globally.

Auriea Harvey is a digital artist and sculptor living and working in Rome. Her practice encompasses virtual and tangible artworks created with a blend of digital and handmade production. Drawing from her extensive experience in net art and video games, she brings a synthesis of mythology, autobiography, art historical reference and imagination – made visible through form, interaction and immersion. Auriea is engaged across time, media, and material to define what sculptural production means in the present moment. Her work can be found in the collections of the Whitney Museum of American Art, Buffalo AKG Art Museum, Walker Art Center, KADIST Collection, Rf.C Collection, and Rhizome's Net Art Anthology. She has exhibited widely with international success including exhibitions at the Tinguely Museum, Basel; the Victoria & Albert Museum, London; the New Museum, New York; and ZKM, Karlsruhe. And she exhibits widely in art galleries and fairs around the world.

Jon Ippolito is a new media artist, writer, and curator who serves as Professor of New Media and Director of the Digital Curation program at the University of Maine. He teaches courses in digital art and design, the technology and ethics of generative artificial intelligence, coding, web design and development, mobile app development, and digital curation and preservation. Ippolito holds a BA in Physics and Astrophysics from Harvard University (1984) and an MFA in Painting and Printmaking from Yale University (1991). His work has been recognized with awards from the Thoma Foundation, Tiffany Foundation, Lannan Foundation, and American Foundation. At the Guggenheim Museum, he curated the first art museum exhibition of virtual reality and co-curated the 2000 Nam June Paik retrospective with John G. Hanhardt. Co-founding the Still Water lab with Joline Blais, Ippolito helped develop social software such as the Learning with AI toolkit, the Variable Media Questionnaire, The Pool, ThoughtMesh, and the Cross-Cultural Partnership. Ippolito has published articles in periodicals ranging from Art Journal to The Washington Post and contributed chapters to over 20 books. He co-authored *At the Edge of Art* (Thames & Hudson, 2006) with Joline Blais and *Re-collection: Art, New Media, and Social Memory* (MIT Press, 2014) with Richard Rinehart.

Michaël Samyn is a digital artist and designer who has significantly contributed to the evolution of interactive art and video games. Trained as a graphic designer, Samyn began creating digital art with the emergence of the World Wide Web. In 1999, he formed the net.art duo Entropy8Zuper! with Auriea Harvey, collaborating as net artists and web designers who pushed the boundaries of online art. In 2002, Samyn

and Harvey cofounded the independent development studio Tale of Tales with the purpose of exploring the artistic potential of video games beyond commercial conventions. Together, they published five major titles for PC, Mac, and iOS, including art game classics like *The Graveyard* and The Path. Samyn also initiated the Notgames initiative, a platform designed to support the development of interactive entertainment that transcends traditional gaming formats. Starting in 2015, he shifted his focus to interactive virtual reality experiences, creating works such as *Cricoterie, Compassie*, and *The Viriditas Chapel of Perpetual Adoration*. Samyn currently lives and works in Rome, Italy, continuing to innovate in the fields of digital art and interactive media.

Sasha Stiles is a first-generation Kalmyk-American poet, artist, and AI researcher working at the nexus of text and technology. Having collaborated with artificial intelligence since 2018, Stiles is known for her pioneering experiments with generative literature and blockchain poetics, and her practice refracts heritage and tradition through explorations of creativity and consciousness, probing the role of the human voice in the machine age. Her hybrid collection *Technelegy* (2021), coauthored with a personalized AI text generator and praised by futurist Ray Kurzweil, exemplifies her groundbreaking approach to poetry as both art form and technology—an ancient and enduring data system that encodes human experience across space and time. Stiles's work has been honored by the Prix Ars Electronica, the Lumen Prize, the Optimism AI Prize, and the Future Art Awards. Her projects, including "Cursive Binary" and "Repetae," have been featured by institutions such as MoMA, *Artforum*, Christie's, NPR, *The Washington Post*, and *Poets & Writers*. She has presented at numerous venues worldwide, including Lincoln Center, the Victoria and Albert Museum, Art Basel, Art Dubai, Art Cologne, SCOPE, Kunsthalle Zürich, Zagreb's Museum of Contemporary Art, Outernet London, Krasl Art Center, and on the billboards of Tokyo's Shibuya Crossing. A graduate of Harvard University and Oxford University, Stiles is the co-founder of the experimental literary collective theVERSEverse and has served as a poetry mentor to the humanoid android BINA48. She lives near New York City with her husband and studio partner, Kris Bones.

SELECTED IMAGES FROM THE EXHIBITION

Photos by Thanassi Karageorgiou

About Museum of the Moving Image

Founded in 1985, MoMI celebrates the history, art, technology, and future of the moving image in all of its forms. Located in Astoria, New York, the Museum presents exhibitions; screenings; discussion programs featuring actors, directors, and creative leaders; and education programs. It houses the nation's most comprehensive collection of moving image artifacts and screens over 500 films annually. Its exhibitions—including the core exhibition *Behind the Screen* and *The Jim Henson Exhibition*—are noted for their integration of material objects, interactive experiences, and audiovisual presentations.

Museum of the Moving Image
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movingimage.org

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